Victorian Adult Literacy and Basic Education Conference

Tuesday 27 and Wednesday 28 September 2011
Victoria University, City Flinders Campus, Melbourne

Session D1 – The Word Nerd
Bronwen Hickman

Word game
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Linguability Game –

Instructions:

Make coloured cards the size of playing cards with prefixes and word roots on them, such as:
para- pre- trans- dis- com- con- fore- sub- tri- mis- ex- post- micro- super- medi- mono- poly- neo- acro- anti- eu-

Put the cards face down and let students choose one each. Ask them to find six words containing this root word or prefix and make a quiz for the class. (They will need a dictionary, such as a learner dictionary, and access to a Concise Oxford to check on word origins.)

Example: student chooses the word root *post-,* after. He/she prepares questions: 'What do we call the examination of a body to find out the cause of death?' [post mortem]; 'If we put something off until another time, what do we call it?' [postpone] etc. The words chosen must have some connection with 'after'... ('post' can also be about mail). Any learner dictionary will be helpful for providing good easy-to-understand definitions of words, to help students frame their questions. When they present their quiz to the class, they should say/display the root word so that the other students can identify the word family. It might be helpful to check their clues first.

Do a quiz yourself to start, and give students the idea.

Spelling activity:

So many ways to say 'No'

Find/think of as many prefixes as you can that mean *not.*
Now turn each of the following words into a word of the opposite meaning by adding the right prefix to it:

material, sense, sensible, rational, grateful, patient, accurate, profitable, complete, legal, moral, honest, reasonable.

Worksheet for students
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Making a new start

Each of the words in the box below has a prefix. Take away the prefix and use *e-* or *ex-* instead, to make a different word. These two prefixes – *e-* and *ex-* – have the meaning: *out of, away from.* Write the meanings, beside the original word and beside the new one.

Example: interior – inside
exterior - outside (of house or building)

intensive	inhale
implode	inhibition
immigrate	impress
accept	include
import	invade
internal	impel

Look for other *ex-* words in the dictionary which mean *out of* or *away from*

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Worksheet
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Try a different prefix

How many times can you change the prefix? (Check that the new words you make are in the dictionary if you are not sure.) Use the prefixes in the box to help you:

Some often-used prefixes:
ac- com- con- de- ef- ex- im- in- oc- per- pro- re-

Example: maintain detain pertain retain sustain
[from *tenere,* to hold in the hand]

affect
[from *facere, fect,* to do]

express
[*premere, press,* to press

transport
[*portare,* to carry]

repose
[*ponere, posit-,* to place, put down]

incur
[*currere*, to run]

command
[*mandare, mand-* to order, to commir]

confess
[a form of *fateri*,*-fess,* to declare]

concise
[*caedo*,*-cise* to cut or kill]

[8 words]

Student Worksheet
Use as oral quiz with students. If you prefer the students to write the answers, copy the sheet with words at left covered or folded back.
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There are patterns that can make words easier to spell, like knowing that the word to describe a person who does a thing often has *-ist* at the end – *artist,* someone who does art; *cartoonist,* someone who draws cartoons. See if you can guess these. (fold the sheet to cover the answers at left).

-ist quiz

archaeologist	someone who studies ancient ruins, records of the past
arsonist	someone who deliberately starts a fire
artist	someone who paints pictures or does other forms of creative work, usually for a living
Baptist	a Christian church which practices baptism by total immersion
biologist	someone who studies living things – plants, animals,etc.
cartoonist	draws humorous pictures, often with a political focus, for newspapers or magazines
chemist, pharmacist	dispenses medicines, sells cough mixture etc.
colonist	settler in a new country
conservationist	tries to protect the natural environment
cyclist	rides a bicycle
evangelist	someone who preaches the Gospel, often travelling around
feminist	believes in the rights of women
finalist	gets to the last round in a competition
florist	arranges the wedding bouquets
journalist	writes for a newspaper
optimist	always looks on the bright side
optometrist	the specialist who looks after your eyes
orthodontist	the specialist who looks after your teech
panellist	part of a group of people, like on a jury, or a game show
pessimist	someone who looks on the gloomy side
physiotherapist	treats patients with massage, heat treatment, etc.
pianist	a musician at the keyboard
radiologist	does your X-ray
rapist	forces another person to have sex against their will
ventriloquist	an entertainer who can make his voice seem to come from somewhere else
violist	plays a stringed instrument, often in an orchestra
zoologist	studies animals